

POWER TO GET THE JOB DONE



It's a dog-eat-dog world out there.

The folks on top are determined to stay on top.

The folks on the bottom are bitter enough to break windows and burn police cars. "What have we got to lose?" they shout.

Democracies are crumbling.

Dictatorships are stumbling.

Chaos is a fire burning across this planet with a will of its own.

"And then many will fall away, and betray one another, and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. And because wickedness is multiplied, most men's love will grow cold. But he who endures to the end will be saved.

And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come."

Matthew 24:10-14

So who's going to "preach the gospel of the kingdom throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations"?

The church? In the shape it's in right now?

And you and I, where do we fit?

Who will proclaim the gospel of the kingdom to this teetering world?

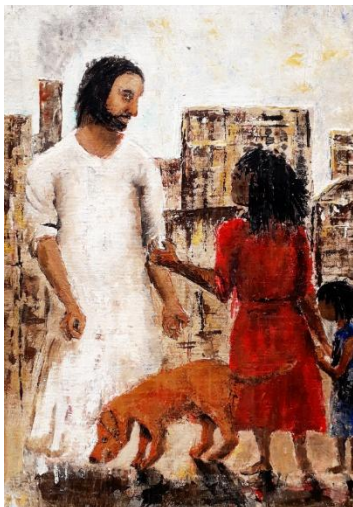
Who actually has the power?

"If only the people up there on the top could be reborn, this world would be changed in a hurry. Convert the top dog, and he will convert the world!"

It's been tried a thousand times and failed.

It looks like God has other plans.

God always seems to use the underdog to get the job done.



Jesus has been telling us this for two thousand years! So why are we still obsessed with the top dog—the man or the woman who has “power”?

The Top Dog

The top dog is the one with the brains, the savvy, who knows how to make things happen.

The CEO, the General, the President, the Bishop---they didn't get there by being wimps.

These guys know how to do “whatever it takes.” They know how to take control...

How to increase profit.

How to shave expenses to the bone.

How to crush the competition.

How to weed out the “dead wood.”

How to be hard-nosed and “practical,” and sideline the “bleeding hearts.”

After all, how can you run a business, an army, a church, without a top-down chain of command?

Yet Jesus keeps telling us that the Father uses the underdog to get his work done.

The Underdog

In the Kingdom of God the underdog is the one with the power.

This upside-down hierarchy is not an option for us; it's a command from the mouth of the Lord himself.

Even though it has been ignored in Christendom for centuries, this command of the Master still holds...

"You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Mark 10:42-45

In God's Kingdom the “chain of command” comes from below.

Way down at the bottom is a man wrapped in a towel, washing feet.



“You call me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.”

John 13:13-15

In God's Kingdom, power rises from the floor where Jesus is on his knees washing feet.

From that place he rules the universe.

Only those who are down there with him share in his power---

---a power infinitely greater than that of any dictator, general, or CEO, or mitred bishop.

***“Whoever would be great among you must be your servant,
and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all.”***

Jesus commands us to lay aside our vanity

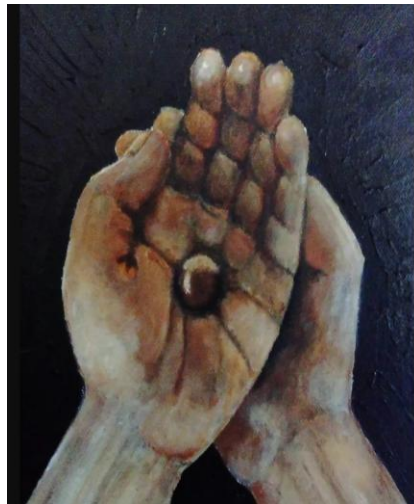
... and start washing feet

... in the shadows of obscurity, leaving the glory to God alone.

Giants of faith have altered the course of history. But the truly great servants in God's Kingdom will never be known on this side of glory.

Their power comes, not from their brains or their status, but from the simple fact that they are crucified with Christ.

These crucified souls are preparing the earth for Judgment Day through their simple obedience, their fervent prayers.



They are the ones who are holding back the powers of darkness until the appointed hour.

They are quietly spreading the fire of the gospel across the earth.

And now the Master invites us to give him our burden of vanity which we have carried for far too long, and join these servants under his yoke.

The Yoke

“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and you shall find rest for your souls.”

Matthew 11:29

Under that yoke is Sabbath Rest. And as we learn from him who is meek and lowly of heart, Jesus imparts to us the power of his death and resurrection—the power that holds the universe together.

Let’s leave the “top dogs” to their vanity games,

... get under the yoke and receive from the Master the power ...



“to proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom to the whole world as a testimony to all nations.”

And then the End will come.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, in the coming days where betrayal, lies, and hatred are so prevalent, where false prophets and wickedness flourish and love grows cold...help us to reject any power that takes us out from under your yoke. Lord, bring us back, bring us back to you. Bring us back to you, who kneeled on the floor and washed feet. Forgive us for the times we have let go, for the times we see the power of the enemy and quiver in fear and anger. Forgive us for engaging in the swirling hatred. We lay our hearts before you, we lay our lives before you. Help us to stay faithful, focused, and to trust in your yoke, to trust in all you have taught us. May we continue to pray fervently for the powers of darkness to be held back. May we endure without dismay. May we embrace your power, the power of servitude, the only power to get the job done, so that we are your gospel to the whole world, proclaiming it with our lives until the very end. Amen.

Message: Richard E. Bieber 2018

Featured Artist: Reverend Ally Barret at reverendally.org

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WHO WAS SLAIN
HAS BEGUN HIS REIGN